

his community, and his state. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Antwan Odom for both the great success he has enjoyed in his life and his outstanding representation of the First District of Alabama. I know his family—his wife Brooke, and his sons, Antwan, Jr., and Baylor—and many friends are also proud of him, and I wish his entire family much health and success in the time ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLONEL
MARC E. FREITAS, UNITED
STATES MARINE CORPS (RET.)

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Colonel Marc E. Freitas on the occasion of his retirement from the United States Marine Corps. Colonel Freitas has honorably served our great Nation for more than 33 years.

A native of Oakland, California, Colonel Freitas first enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1971, earning the title of Marine at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, in San Diego California. Within a year, Colonel Freitas was selected to become a Marine Officer, and was subsequently commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant of Marines in June 1974. Following completion of The Basic School at Quantico, Virginia, Colonel Freitas attended and completed Naval Flight Training at Pensacola, Florida, and was designated a Naval Flight Officer.

Colonel Freitas has served with distinction throughout his career. His unselfish sacrifice has taken him throughout the globe in the service of our Nation. He has flown RF-4B reconnaissance aircraft off the deck of the U.S.S. *Midway* during the Iranian Hostage crisis, flown missions from Guantanamo Naval Base, Cuba, and served with the United States Air Force, flying reconnaissance aircraft at Shaw Air Force Base, in Sumter, South Carolina. He has also held several commands, to include a squadron detachment of Phantom aircraft deployed to the Republic of Korea, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Pt., North Carolina, and the Marine Aviation Detachment located at Naval Air Station, China Lake, California.

In 1992, Colonel Freitas deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia, as the Plans Officer for the Joint Force Air Component Commander. His efforts there helped provide relief to millions of Somalis during Operation Restore Hope.

Perhaps Colonel Freitas' proudest accomplishments occurred while assigned as the Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting. As the Task Force's Deputy Commander, his efforts were instrumental in resolving the fates of hundreds of American servicemen missing as a result of the war in Southeast Asia. Deploying to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, from the Task Force Headquarters in Hawaii, Colonel Freitas helped to provide answers to the families of these missing Americans, and in turn contributed to our national healing from this tumultuous period of history.

Colonel Freitas has completed Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Amphib-

ious Warfare School, and the Armed Forces Staff College, and in 1993 he was selected to become the first Marine Corps Fellow at the RAND Corporation, where he worked to find solutions to the issues facing both the Marine Corps and the Nation in the decades ahead. Marc was promoted to the rank of Colonel in October 1996, and his personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, two Meritorious Service Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

In October 2001, Colonel Freitas began his assignment as the Deputy Legislative Assistant to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. In the 3 years he served in this important position, his support to Members of Congress has played a vital role in allowing this body to readily address issues of national importance. Further, his complete grasp of all facets of naval warfare and his ability to provide this Congress with accurate and timely response to congressional inquiries has helped to ensure a bright future for our Marine Corps.

Throughout his career, Colonel Marc Freitas has demonstrated those values that we as a Nation expect from our Marines. His impeccable integrity, exceptional moral character, skilled leadership, and absolute professionalism have helped to make the Marine Corps the honorable institution it is today. On behalf of the Congress and the nation, I wish Marc, his wife Linda, and their children Jenny and Matthew, fair winds and following seas, as they enter this new chapter of their lives.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 2046, THE
SERVICEMEMBERS' HEALTH IN-
SURANCE PROTECTION ACT OF
2005

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 2046, the Servicemembers' Health Insurance Protection Act of 2005, to strengthen the rights of men and women serving in the Reserve components of our armed forces when they seek to have their health insurance reinstated upon release from active military duty. As Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am pleased that Mr. EVANS, Ranking Minority Member of our Committee; Mr. BOOZMAN, Chairman of the Committee's Economic Opportunity Subcommittee; and Ms. HERSETH, the Subcommittee's Ranking Minority Member, have joined me as original cosponsors in introducing this legislation.

Frequently, members of the National Guard and Reserve drop their health insurance coverage upon their mobilization, because they and their families have become eligible for the Department of Defense TRICARE health care system. Under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), a servicemember ordered to active duty who terminates health insurance coverage is entitled to reinstatement of coverage after returning to civilian life, but the SCRA does not currently expressly protect the servicemember against a premium increase upon reinstatement. This measure would prohibit a premium increase upon reinstatement if

it affects only the individual servicemember, but it would allow general increases in premiums if they apply to other persons with similar coverage.

Also, under a change to TRICARE eligibility in 2003, members of the National Guard and Reserve are allowed to begin their TRICARE coverage in advance of actually reporting for active duty. However, under existing provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), if reservists elect TRICARE coverage prior to departing for active duty and do not continue their employer-sponsored health care insurance until they have begun active duty, they may lose their right to reinstatement of coverage. This measure would conform the USERRA health care insurance reinstatement right to the change in TRICARE eligibility and ensure no loss of coverage.

Mr. Speaker, these improvements in our laws would further protect members of the National Guard and Reserve who so willingly make great personal sacrifices in the defense of our Nation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2046, the Servicemembers' Health Insurance Protection Act of 2005, to provide new health insurance protections for these guardians of freedom.

TRIBUTE TO KAHUKU HIGH AND
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest congratulations to the incredible students of Kahuku High and Intermediate School for their great achievement in winning 4th place at the national finals of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program, held in Washington, DC from April 30 to May 2, 2005. These outstanding students from my Oahu's North Shore underwent months of intensive study and hard-won victories to earn the right to represent Hawaii in the finals, where they competed against a class from every state in the country and demonstrated a remarkable understanding of the fundamental ideas and values of American constitutional government.

This is the second consecutive year in Hawaii's 9-year history at this rigorous competition that Kahuku has competed in the final 10. This is truly a wonderful accomplishment that our whole state is deeply proud of!

I want to again commend Kahuku's great teacher, Sandra Cashman, for her unending commitment to her students and for producing new generations of responsible citizens. Commendations are also in order for State Coordinator (and State Representative) Lyla Berg and District Coordinator Carolina Kaanehe for fostering development of what will surely be our leaders of tomorrow.

However, ultimately this competition is by and about our outstanding students. So I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to each and all of them by entering their names for posterity into our CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: Genevieve Allen, Yesenia Arevalo, Amanda Baize, Bonnie Cameron, Meri Ching, Dannah Christensen, Krystle Corpuz, Oliver Howells, Lorna Kekua, Jokke Kokkonen, Jacquelyn Lautaha, William Law, Catalina